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## News leaks from right and left alike

**C**ONSERVATIVES, including the president, have frequently attacked liberals for revealing government secrets to the press. But veteran Washington correspondent Daniel Schorr recently reported several examples of prominent conservatives — and the president himself — disclosing sensitive information to the public. In nearly every case the leakers gained politically or advanced their own ideology through the leaks. In one notable recent case involving former President Nixon, however, loose-lipped bungling seems to have been the cause.

In any case, Schorr's litany of leaks shows that conservatives have no claim to being less-leaky-than-thou and are certainly in no position to point fingers.

Here are a few examples:

Sen. Jesse Helms, a supporter of Roberto d'Aubuisson, the right-wing candidate in El Salvador's recent election, is widely suspected of "blowing" a CIA operation funneling money to President Jose Napoleon Duarte, reports Schorr. Helms denied the charge, but Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Barry Goldwater and Vice Chairman Daniel Patrick Moynihan in as much as said Helms was the source.

Goldwater himself revealed the CIA's role in organizing the mining of Nicaraguan harbors. Believing he had been inadequately informed, Goldwater exploded on the Senate floor about the mining. When it was suggested that Goldwater had failed to read or understand his briefing paper, the senator "declassified" and sent to William Safire of The New York Times the exact language of the secret CIA memorandum, Schorr recounts.

Even former President Richard Nixon in a recent CBS interview managed to bungle into a leak. One reason for the CIA's concern about the release of the Pentagon Papers in 1971, Nixon told CBS, was that the document contained an item that "could only have come from the fact that we had Brezhnev's car bugged."

Although Reagan has gone so far as to order the use of lie detectors to prevent leaks in his administration, the president himself has had no qualms about disclosing secrets when they served his administration's propaganda purposes.

Reports Schorr: "President Reagan had to override strenuous objections from the intelligence community when he decided, in March 1983, to show photos of military installations in Cuba — in his words, 'secret until now' — during a television speech intended to dramatize the 'relentless Soviet military buildup.' "

After the shooting down of a Korean civilian airliner, Reagan piqued the National Security Agency when he ordered the use of recorded Soviet pilot-to-ground communications for Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick's presentation to the U.N. Security Council. At first the Japanese government provided a cover saying the tapes came from Japanese monitoring posts. But it soon emerged, Schorr reports, that the tapes were from the super-secret 6920th U.S. Electronic Security Squadron.

Schorr says that possibly because of Reagan's disclosure, the Soviets have reportedly introduced a new scrambling system for their military aviation communications.

All of this leads to a logical and troubling question: At what point do politicians, whatever their political persuasion, draw the line when they decide whether to leak national security information?